



Information to help organisations during the cyclone crisis

At a time such as we are now experiencing, support for our clients and their employees is paramount. Over the coming days situations will change dramatically and people will feel the need for support at different times. Some may not feel the need for support at all.

We have provided the information below to assist organisations. We have also put together some information to assist your employees which you may find useful to distribute to as many people as possible. Please also remember to remind people that if they need counselling services to call 0800 327 669 where someone will be on hand to help.

Natural disasters like cyclones, disrupt lives physically and psychologically, creating intense emotional distress for individuals, families and whole communities. Organisations play a vital and valuable role in assisting and supporting their employees in the immediate aftermath and in the days, weeks and months following a disaster.

It's important to be aware that everyone will respond differently and everyone's needs will be different, initially and over time. Being prepared to provide initial and long term support for your employees will enhance and promote their own personal coping strategies and resilience.

- If needed, allow additional time at home to tend to family matters.
- Establish an open door policy that allows employees to seek the appropriate care when needed.
- Create an environment that allows employees to talk amongst themselves about fears and hopes related to the disaster. Openly sharing with others has been known to promote personal recovery.
- Be mindful and respectful of individual needs. Some employees may feel uncomfortable sharing their feelings. Remember that there is no right or wrong way to feel.
- Encourage employees to communicate their needs, rather than assume you know what their needs may be.
- Promote self-efficacy by engaging people in meeting their own needs by helping them regain their confidence and ability to manage their current and future situations.
- Maintain communication if an employee is away from the workplace for any length of time.
- Give employees assurance that affected families will be supported in some form or another. A disaster such as the floods has the power to entirely consume everyone involved, especially when it has an impact on one's family.
- If possible and when appropriate try to establish normal routines as soon as possible. This aids recovery by providing employees with an opportunity to be active and return to a sense of normalcy.
- Provide simple and accurate information on how to access services, specifically encourage, and make it easy for, employees to speak with a professional counsellor from their Employee Assistance Program.

How to access the Organisational Support services

Managers can contact AccessEAP by telephoning New Zealand on **0800 327 669** for confidential enquiries and appointments.

